

NHS RETIREMENT FELLOWSHIP - SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Background.

In view of recent media coverage of poor practice within the charity sector, the Audit, Risk and Investment sub-committee has identified Safeguarding as a key priority.

Safeguarding is taking reasonable steps to protect people who come into contact with the charity from harm. It applies equally to members, guests, volunteers, employees and trustees.

Safeguarding also protects organisations and nothing is more damaging to charities than a safeguarding failure. Organisational reputation for charities, and the NHS in particular, can be a major risk if safeguarding policies are inadequate.

It is an important shared priority of public services, and a key responsibility of local authorities who have developed a range of measures to protect people from abuse and maltreatment of any kind.

The bodies responsible for regulating Charities in Great Britain recently reminded all charities and trustees of the importance of trustee responsibilities in relation to safeguarding which is a key governance priority for all Charities, not just those working with groups traditionally considered at risk.

2. Policy Statement.

The NHS Retirement Fellowship exists to support members, maintain and create new friendships, making retirement work for all. Everyone can be subject to some form of abuse and the organisation needs to be able to identify and mitigate abuse.

The Fellowship is committed to the wellbeing of its members, guests, staff, volunteers and trustees. Every person has a right to dignity and it is our duty to value all people and to protect them from harm.

In this respect the Fellowship expects those accessing our services and premises to treat members and staff with the courtesy and respect that they would expect to receive themselves. In addition members are encouraged to report any safeguarding concern they have in respect of a fellow member.

Trustees are held responsible for the charity's reputation and will put in place the appropriate support and training to deliver the safeguarding policy.

The purpose of this policy is to assist staff, members, trustees and representatives of the Fellowship how to identify different forms of abuse and thereafter to raise concerns using the charity's procedures and to signpost staff and members to other sources of help and information.

3. CHARITY COMMISSION & OFFICE OF THE SCOTTISH CHARITY REGULATOR GUIDANCE.

3.1 The guidance states that charities must take reasonable steps to protect from harm those connected with the charity. This includes:

- members and guests
- staff
- volunteers
- trustees
- other people connected to its activities.

3.2 This should be a key governance priority for all charities, regardless of size, type or income.

3.3 Charities must ensure that assets are used only to support or carry out the charity's purposes and must not expose assets, beneficiaries or reputation to undue risk.

4. PRINCIPLES.

The NHS Retirement Fellowship is committed to:

- develop an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so it is safe for people to report incidents and concerns in the knowledge they will be dealt with professionally and sensitively by appropriately trained staff.
- report incidents and concerns to the relevant authorities; learn from any mistakes and put in place the relevant mechanisms to stop them happening again.
- handle incidents as they arise responding without delay to every complaint made where there has been a suggestion that someone may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

- contact the appropriate body responsible for regulating charities about any safeguarding issues, or serious safeguarding incidents, complaints or allegations which have not previously been disclosed to the charity regulators.
- have regard to the likelihood that personal information may have to be disclosed to relevant bodies.
- ensuring that any personal information complies with GDPR in terms of consent, disclosure and making sure data is not used inappropriately. The use of personal data should only be for the benefit of the individual.
- ensuring that Staff and Officials of the charity have the appropriate support and training to carry out safeguarding responsibilities and where necessary identify serious incidents and contribute to the reporting needs.

In meeting the requirements of the principles, the Fellowship will have regard to legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

5 FORMS OF ABUSE / HARM

- 5.1 Abuse, harm and neglect take many forms and can lead to the violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.
- 5.2 Abuse is a misuse of power and control that one person has over another. Where someone is dependent on another, there is the possibility of abuse or neglect unless safeguards are put in place.
- 5.3 There are many forms of abuse and neglect:
- 5.3.1 **Discriminatory abuse**
This includes some forms of harassment, slurs or unfair treatment relating to:
- race
 - gender and gender identity
 - age
 - disability
 - sexual orientation
 - religion

5.3.2 **Domestic abuse**

This is typically an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member.

5.3.3 **Financial abuse**

This could be someone stealing money or other valuables, who is in a relationship with the individual. It might be that someone appointed to look after money on behalf of someone else is using it inappropriately or coercing that person to spend it in a way they are not happy with.

Internet scams and doorstep crime are also common forms of financial abuse but these are classed as crimes, unless it can be proved that there was a targeting of a vulnerable person in which case it would become a safeguarding issue.

5.3.4 **Neglect/Self Neglect**

Neglect includes not being provided with enough food or with the right kind of food, or not being taken proper care of.

Leaving someone without help to wash or change dirty or wet clothes, not getting to a doctor when needed or not making sure that the right medicines are available all count as neglect.

5.3.5 **Psychological abuse**

This includes:

- emotional abuse
- threats to hurt or abandon
- stopping someone from seeing people
- humiliating, blaming, controlling, intimidating or harassing
- verbal abuse
- cyberbullying and isolation
- an unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks

5.3.6 Physical abuse

This includes:

- being hit, slapped, pushed or restrained
- being denied food or water
- not being helped to go to the bathroom when the person needs to
- misuse of medicines

5.3.7 Sexual abuse

This includes:

- indecent exposure
- sexual harassment
- inappropriate looking or touching
- sexual teasing or innuendo
- sexual photography
- being forced to watch pornography or sexual acts
- being forced or pressured to take part in sexual acts
- rape.

5.3.8 Modern Slavery

This includes:

- human trafficking,
- forced labour, domestic servitude, gangmasters

6. HOW TO RAISE CONCERNS IN THE NHS RETIREMENT FELLOWSHIP.

There may come a time when it is necessary to raise a concern about an individual or situation. All staff, members and trustees have a right and a duty to report concerns or allegations of abuse. It is the duty of everyone to be alert to the possibility of abuse amongst those they meet.

Within the NHSRF we have to be aware of our responsibilities, as ‘good samaritans’, to raise concerns about our members who may be subject to harm arising from activities **outside** of the functions and activity of the NHSRF. This would normally be dealt with on a local basis.

Serious incidents would be reported by the Chief Executive to the Charity Commission for England and Wales or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Here are the simple steps to take:

- If you identify a safeguarding issue within the NHSRF you should report it direct to the police or social services and inform the Central Office of the details.
- If the concern is about the Chief Executive, report direct to the Chair of the Trustees.

If the concern relates to an immediate medical matter or someone is believed to be at risk of serious harm, call 999.

8 ANNUAL REPORTING

The Chief Executive will report all known cases annually to the Trustees to ensure that its responsibilities are fulfilled. Details of each case will not be provided unless the charity as a whole is at risk.

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